

Suffield Police Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, February 20, 2008

The regular meeting of the Suffield Police Commission was held on Wednesday, February 20, 2008 at Suffield Police Headquarters, 911 Mountain Road, Suffield, Ct.

Present were: Chairman Don Miner, Commissioners Jack Quinn, John Zavisza, Linda Stevenson, Matt Joyal and Peter Hill. Also present were Chief Michael Manzi, Capt. David Bourque, and Recording Secretary Karen McKown.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Miner.

At 6:50 p.m. Commissioner Jack Quinn motioned to go into executive session for police officer interviews and to discuss a union grievance. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Zavisza and passed unanimously. Chief Manzi and Captain Bourque were present during executive session.

The meeting returned to open session at 9:30p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Mr. Miner read:

A letter from Sgt. Cady of the Torrington Police Department complimenting Officer Chevalier on apprehending a hit and run drunk driver while off duty in their town.

A letter from the SVAA to Officer Chevalier thanking him for his help during a lift assist in West Suffield.

A letter from a resident thanking the Police Department for their response regarding her complaints of speeders on Phelps Rd. and also specifically to Officer Osowiecki thanking him for his help when her puppy was struck by a car last week, also on Phelps Rd.

A letter from a resident on East (N) St. regarding a tree that came down in their yard and took out power lines. Resident was apologizing for the tree falling and causing several problems and a lengthy road closure.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Officer Osowiecki announced that on April 8th at the Conference Center on Mapleton Ave. author Terry Fleck will be appearing for a K-9 handler's conference. There will be over 100 K-9 handlers and handler supervisors present for the event.

MINUTES OF JAN 16, 2007 MEETING:

Commissioner Miner pointed out an error on page 3 under the Chairman's Comment paragraph.

Commissioner Quinn motioned to accept the department reports as amended, seconded by Commissioner Stevenson and approved unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

BUDGET AND FINANCE – Captain Bourque stated the department is on the right page so far. Overtime is starting to accumulate due to saved holidays being used/replaced and two current workers compensation cases as well as new contract raises being in effect. Bottom line is 59% through January which puts us in line where we need to be. Commissioner Miner asked if the actual numbers do include the retro pays and was told they do not. We are paying out the 3.5% in pay increases but the line item has not been credited by the town. The budget has not been adjusted. We still have not received a credit on diesel fuel. The overtime account will continue to need to be watched closely.

ACTIVITY REPORT

Activity – Commissioner Miner asked if the previous two years of activity could be added to the report as he feels it would be helpful in comparison. He was told those years could be added. Captain Bourque pointed out that we are seeing an increase in average time spent per call.

Detective Bureau – Chief Manzi commented that two very lengthy and well written reports were submitted to court by Detective Sargent in relation to the town hall burglary. A very nice job was done. The two parties responsible for the burglary are now serving sentences in New Hampshire for burglaries in that state and also have other outstanding warrants they will need to answer to for other cases.

K-9 – Chief Manzi stated that a random locker search had been conducted as a reaction to meetings with the Board of Education as well as public concern regarding drugs in our schools. Chief Manzi met with Officer Osowiecki and has discussed some ideas regarding drug searches in the schools as well as in the school parking lots, the message being do not bring drugs to our schools.

School Resource Officer - None

Evaluations – An evaluation of Officer Kieselback was submitted for the commission review which did not require any action.

Commissioner Quinn motioned to accept the department reports as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Zavisza and passed unanimously.

CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Manzi stated that Dan Kehoe had submitted a proposal with regards to the radio upgrade for the year 2013. Recommendation was not to change our current radio frequency which is a VHF system operating on 150 mega hertz. Many larger departments

now operate on a 400 and 800 mega hertz system which has ultra high frequencies. The Chief stated that our system is working on a day to day basis. Captain Bourque stated that a request for 1.2 million dollars has been submitted which includes upgrades to the present technology. Mr. Kehoe was complimented by the Captain for a great presentation which was received very well by ACCE. Mr. Kehoe built the current radio system when the police department was built and has since been extremely helpful with troubleshooting and repairs even in instances when the company who owns the system could not provide that service.

Chief Manzi stated that the department has been sending officers to CIRMA, an affiliate with the Connecticut Inter Local Risk Management Agency, for defensive driving tactics training. The feedback the Chief has received from the officers is that the classes have been a waste of time and did not provide the same training as the defensive driving simulator that our officers are scheduled to train with in the near future. The Chief also stated that 186 police officers were killed in the line of duty last year. 69 by gun fire while on the other hand 82 by traffic related accidents. While these numbers are the highest since 2001 and 9-11 the number of line of duty deaths has steadily decreased since 1974 due to two factors, bullet proof vests and safer police vehicles. Chief Manzi stated that these facts were presented recently in a request for a third police cruiser for the department. Chief Manzi presented the top 10 reasons for police officer deaths to the commission and will be distributing it to the officers as well. Commissioner Miner asked if the officers are required to wear seat belts while driving their cruisers. The Chief stated that state standards as well as department policy do require the officers to wear seat belts, however from personal experience has mixed feelings about the subject.

BUDGET 2008/09 – Commissioner Miner stated that he, Captain Bourque and Chief Manzi had recently met with Debbie Cerrato and the First Selectman and presented the budget that was approved at the last commission meeting. Two changes were agreed upon, the budget will be modified for only 2 cruiser purchases next year and the payroll budget was adjusted down by \$10,000 due to the fact that neither of the new hires will be eligible for overtime next year and that both will be starting at probationary pay rates. The next step will be for the First Selectman to present the modified budget to the Board of Selectman and Commissioner Miner does not expect any further modifications. On March 10, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. the proposed budget will go before the Board of Finance and all commission members are welcome to attend that meeting at the police department. The next step will be for the Board of Finance to recommend any modifications and then to present it in a public hearing. The proposed budget only increased by 5.9% which is the effect of the staffing changes and the new contracts.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

CHAIRMAN COMMENT – Commissioner Quinn motioned to make a conditional offer of employment to police officer candidate number 1 (alphabetically) subject to hiring procedures, seconded by Commissioner Zavisza and passed unanimously. Commissioner Quinn motioned to make a conditional offer of employment to police officer candidate number 2 (alphabetically) subject to hiring procedures, seconded by Commissioner Hill and passed unanimously.

Commissioner Stevenson discussed the web site with regards to the commission. Discussion was had regarding pictures for the site. It was decided that a picture of the commission for the web site would be taken as a group immediately after adjournment of the meeting.

At 10:18 p.m. Commissioner Zavisza motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Hill and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen McKown
Stacy Robins, Transcriptions

Donald Miner, Chairman

Recording Secretary